



Welcome to
talk of the town

issue 523

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Professionals

Did you know?

WATER, WATER, WATER

More fresh water gushes up from cracks in the limestone at Waikoropupu, near Takaka in the Nelson province, than from any freshwater spring anywhere in the world. Over 2,100 million litres of water gush up every 24 hours.

MAN VS. BEAST

Less than 5% of the population of New Zealand is human - the rest are animals, giving one of the highest ratios of animals to humans in the world.

WATER, WATER, WATER

More rainbow trout in the 2-3 kg category are caught annually in New Zealand than in the rest of the world put together.



EASY COME, EASY GO

The shortest term of a New Zealand Prime Minister was seven days: Harry Atkinson was appointed on 28 August 1884 and resigned on 3 September 1884, beating the record of his immediate predecessor, Robert Stout, by six days.

2010 Child Cancer Foundation

This year's poster kids Claudia Little, Hana Ellis-Kaa and Kavahn Taumatauka represent all our children with cancer and they are helping the Foundation by appearing on advertising and media coverage for the Appeal.

The Beads of Courage programme has helped all three children honour and recognise the challenges they have overcome in their own cancer journeys. Hana who featured last year has collected 824 over her two and a half year treatment and five year old Claudia who has had to have a kidney removed has 180 beads on her necklace. Kavahn who his mum calls "a little trooper" is still in the middle of his treatment and has a "K" to his growing beads which he refers to as his "bling".

Children are at the heart of everything we all do so to help isn't a hard thing to want to do

Professionals have been a cornerstone supporter/ sponsor of the Child Cancer Foundation for 15 years now and it is truly an emotional relationship. We are happy to have been part of making a significant difference in the lives of many children such as Kavahn, Claudia and Hana with cancer and their families. Our people fundraise throughout the entire year (not just collection week). Every year we rally our troops, put on our thinking caps and come up with ways to offer the support these courageous young people and their families deserve. With your continued generosity, Appeal Week was a positive and inspiring experience. Our offices all fundraise locally and nationally without prompting - simply because we believe in the cause and want to help.

From street appeals and breakfast auctions to fundraising golf days and more, Professionals have contributed in excess of \$3.2m and countless volunteer hours over the past 15 years.

Children are at the heart of everything we all do so to help isn't a hard thing to want to do.

From around the country here are just a few examples of what our teams are doing out in the field. Some of us went undercover; Puss'n'Boots and his team in Newmarket managed to bring a few smiles and give (and get) a few hugs with his larger than life swagger!



This year's poster kids: Claudia Little, Hana Ellis-Kaa and Kavahn Taumatauka.

Puss was a great hit with the kids (and the not so small kids!) on the day.

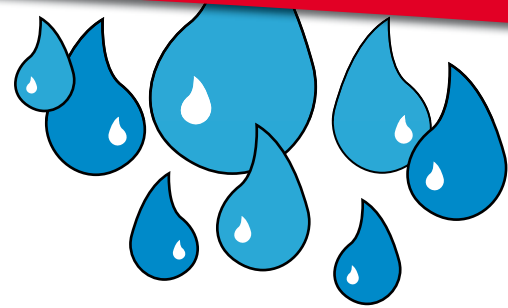
This sketch of the Beehive was kindly drawn and donated by Prime Minister, John Key for McDowell Real Estate, Rotorua to auction off at their fundraising breakfast. Proving to be a popular item, it sold very quickly to one happy bidder!



Professionals Hutt City, Lower Hutt, also held a fundraising breakfast and featured Eric Rush (Former All Black and NZ 7's Player) as their guest speaker.

Street collections, sausage sizzles, auctions and more from around the country continue to add to the growing fund from Professionals to the Child Cancer Foundation.





Leaky Homes!

Many home owners have found themselves in the unfortunate position of owning a leaky home. So what is the problem all about?

New Zealand's building industry has thrived throughout the last few decades, and new houses and subdivisions are now a common sight in most residential areas. However, some buildings are affected by "Leaky Building Syndrome", otherwise known as weather tightness issues. Leaky Building Syndrome is the term given to a building that has not been designed or constructed to perform suitably under normal weather conditions for New Zealand.

This problem has affected homeowners from right across the country, arising in many different property types, including apartments, townhouses, stand alone houses, high spec homes and commercial buildings.

There are many different problems that cause a building to leak. Some of these problems include:

Design: Improper design techniques may cause a building to leak, including those that involve flat roofs, solid balustrades and other common earmarks of a leaky home. The trend towards Mediterranean style homes was a major player in design flaws that caused leaky buildings.

Materials: The use of inappropriate materials, incorrect installation of these or improper design involving some materials may cause weather tightness issues.

In particular, cladding (especially monolithic cladding) has caused a lot of problems in leaky homes; for example, the absence of required cladding cavities may let moisture into the home and trap it in, causing deterioration of the building. Secondly, the use of untreated timber has also contributed widely to the problem. Until recently, this use was acceptable by New Zealand building requirements. However if untreated timber is exposed to moisture, it rots and deteriorates. As many homes in New Zealand are constructed of timber framing, this damage can affect the actual structure of the home.

Construction: In some cases, buildings have not been constructed using correct building practices, or the actual building, when finished, may have differed from the design. Again, the incorrect installation of materials also plays a role in construction issues.

A home that leaks can pose a multitude of problems to the home owner.

First and foremost, the building may be, or may become unsafe. Rotting balconies and deteriorating timber structures can make a leaky building a dangerous place. Leaky home owners should refer to a building inspector to determine the safety of their home.

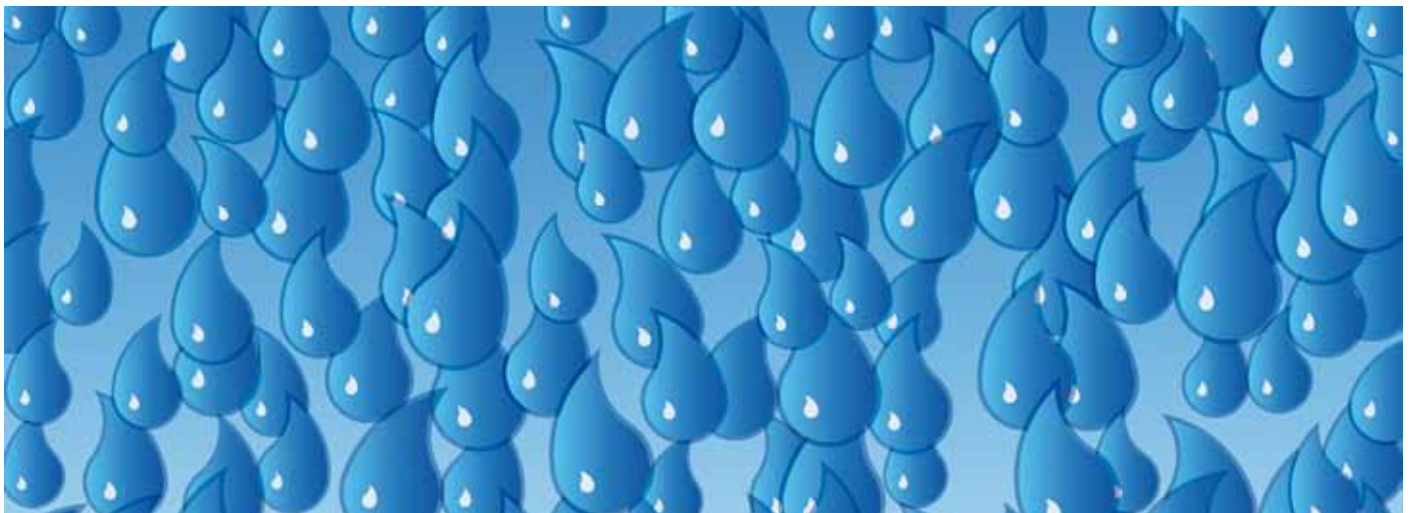
Secondly, leaky homes can also be hazardous to the occupant's health. Rot and moisture damage can result in the growth of mould and bacteria, which poses a risk to many people, especially young children, the elderly or those prone to allergic reactions or respiratory problems such as asthma.

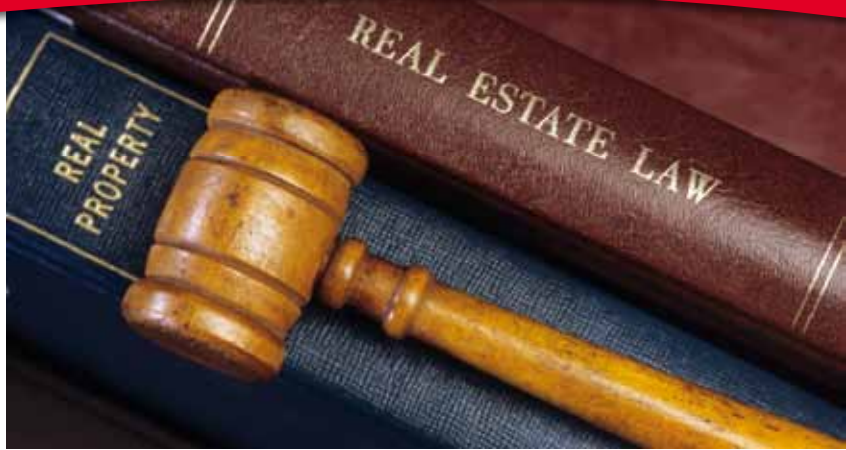
Thirdly, leaky homes require remedial work. Many home owners find themselves in a situation where they cannot afford to commence remedial work, and will need to seek compensation from elsewhere. In most cases, the property's value will also be directly affected, and the sale of the property may prove difficult.

Need more information? If you need forms, procedures and comprehensive advice, a good starting point to is the Department of Building & Housing website, www.dbh.govt.nz/weathertight-services.

■ Content contributed by www.nailed.co.nz

A home that leaks can pose a multitude of problems to the home owner





Rules & Regulations

Since November 17th 2009, the real estate industry has been working with new rules and regulations under the Real Estate Agents Act (REAA). At first glance they can appear confusing but to summarise these simply, we have listed them below to explain what it means if you are buying or selling your property.

Under the new rules:

- * Agents, branch managers and salespersons must all be licensed individually (previously they came under the umbrella of the Agency they worked for).
- * An independent Real Estate Agents Authority has been established that is responsible for licensing, complaints, disciplinary action in relation to unsatisfactory conduct, industry standards, and providing information for consumers.
- * New complaints and disciplinary processes are followed including the appointment of Complaints Assessment Committees (CAC) by the Real Estate Agents Authority (REAA) and the establishment of an independent Real Estate Agents Disciplinary Tribunal.
- * New responsibilities apply to real estate agents, including duties in relation to the information that must be provided to consumers.
- * It is no longer compulsory for agents to be members of the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ).

How will the Real Estate Agents Authority benefit you?

The independent Real Estate Agents Authority plays a key role in ensuring the quality and professionalism of the industry. It:

- * provides an independent, fair and open complaints and disciplinary process.
- * provides for new responsibilities for real estate agents including information that must be provided to consumers.
- * has issued a Code of Professional Conduct and Client Care. This is a published code that those working in the real estate industry must follow and is a reference point for discipline.
- * provides consumer information that will help guide you through the property buying and selling process.
- * raises industry standards through industry entry requirements and continuing education.

* provides a searchable public register of licensees to enable you to make an informed decision when choosing the person to sell your property
You can:

- ✓ Check whether the person you are considering dealing with is licensed
- ✓ Find out how to contact them
- ✓ Check the history of the person's licence
- ✓ Check their recent disciplinary record.

The Real Estate Agents Act 2008 addresses these concerns and provides a modern regulatory environment for the real estate industry.

What will the new complaints process involve?

One of the main concerns about the 1976 Act was that consumers did not have ready access to an independent complaints and disciplinary process. Under the new Act people will be able to take a complaint about a licensee or a former licensee to the Real Estate Agents Authority, which will refer the complaint to a Complaints Assessment Committee to investigate. This process will be fair and impartial for consumers and for agents, branch managers and salespersons.

What do we think?

Our team at Professionals have taken every step possible to ensure that when buying or selling, your experience with our team is positive and transparent. Education, roadshows and ongoing support mean Professionals continue to deliver top quality, reliable service to all of our valued clients.

